

COMMERCIAL.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1870.**  
By our exchanges from the United States, we see that there is a very general desire to return to specie currency. To effect this would seem to require nothing but the act of the Government assuming the resumption of specie currency at a certain date. It would be the resumption of specie currency to decline, but it will probably be done. In England a specie currency exists, but the circulation consists largely of notes payable on demand, though the gold is never demanded. There are no small notes in use, and that is all small transactions. In our country, the only currency note is the one dollar note. It is issued by the Treasury and is not redeemable in gold. It is thought that it can be easily carried out.

It is stated that Secretary of the Treasury is making arrangements to bring out a new loan of a half per cent. interest, and that it will be officially announced at an early day. It is also said that an agent of the Treasury has recently visited the Hawaiian Islands to collect the interest on the loan. It is authorized to treat for a loan of four and a half per cent.

The Superintendent of the Money Order Division of the Post Office Department, states that the growth of the system of money orders in the United States, which has been in operation for four years, is unprecedented. The amount of money remitted by postal orders during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1869, amounted to \$1,000,000, and during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1870, the amount reached the astonishing figure of \$4,000,000. The number of orders received for this amount was about 1,000,000. The amount of the revenue to the Department is very small, but the system is very valuable. This year's order system will be introduced into our islands with credit to the credit of every part of the group.

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THE PACIFIC Commercial Advertiser.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1870.

History Repeating Itself.

The management of coolies, and the systems peculiar to such laborers have been known to the statesmen and writers of England, France and America, are undoubtedly those which prevail in the British and French West Indies, and which have been so ably described and explained by the French writer, M. Cochon, and an American, we believe, W. G. Sewell.

The Hawaiian immigration law was strongly opposed by the Anti-Slavery Society of England, and the sanction of the Government was very reluctantly given. The present immigration scheme is said to be a victory of the Anti-Slavery party of Jamaica. It is not considered a triumph of the planting interest, but rather a fair expression of the liberal public sentiment of the island.

The objections raised are in some points much the same as have been raised here because of a very strong distrust of all measures emanating, or supposed to emanate, from the planting interest. And this distrust is not difficult to account for. While the planters of other days were making representations of a great dearth of labor, they were driving Creole labor from the estates by a mistaken policy and oppressive legislation. For "Creole" substitute native labor and the same cause will apply here. We have urged that the "Masters and Servants" law is the most potent cause of the refusal of natives to work upon our plantations.

In the British West Indies it has been found that the coolies obtained at Madras and Calcutta are by far the best laborers; their docility and gentleness amounting to a fault. Of the Chinese the writer says: "The Chinaman is not liked; he is close, cunning, avaricious, unprogressive, quarrelsome, and seldom becomes a permanent colonist. His habits of life are repulsive both to Creole and European." The East Indian coolie is only referred to, and it is claimed in defense of their immigration that they are British subjects changing their place of residence.

Why immigration became a necessity in the British Colonies is partly explained thus: "Because the planters pursued a policy of coercion that compelled the negroes, in simple self-defense, to abandon estate-service; and the confidence between the proprietary and laboring interests then destroyed has never been restored." The term coercion is the explanation of our "Masters and Servants" law as rendered by the Hon. G. Rhodes, at the recent meetings at Kaunakapili.

"Because land in Jamaica is very cheap and plentiful, and the negro has discovered that cultivating for himself is more to his advantage pecuniarily, socially, and morally than cultivating for others." Our planters at their meetings said that the native had his kulama, and could support himself so easily that he did not care to labor on a plantation. Natives have always had their kulama, and until of late years were always willing to work upon plantations, and we do not believe that they have just discovered that they can live easier upon their patch of land. The cause of refusal to work upon plantations must be sought for and will be found to rest upon the treatment under the "Masters and Servants" law.

"Because in the management of his estate he (the planter) insists, as a *sine qua non*, that his tenant shall be his laborer, and that his relations with the latter shall be strictly those of master and servant." It will be remembered that a speaker in the planting interest, at the Planters' Meeting, said: "That the situation was such that in order to secure labor some plan was necessary by which it might be forced." The same speaker said in the so-called Constitutional Convention, and in a burst of virtuous indignation declared our plantations to be "despotisms."

"Because the governing classes have shamefully neglected the welfare of the masses. They have not made the annual decline of population a subject of earnest consideration, nor have they essayed to check it by the adoption of the most ordinary precautions." We ask the Government what practical efforts have you made to arrest the "annual decline"? By legalizing the sale of opium and are you not adding fuel to the flame? Do you make your private interests or the public good your first duty? Other reasons are given, applicable here, such as, that epidemics have swept off thousands from the laboring class; that the labor command was transient, and uncertainty, as in a case, was such that capitalists were deterred from going into new enterprises, and thus already established ones were crippled.

Speaking of the refusal of the negro (native) to work upon plantations, at his preference to work upon his own land, the writer says: "I justify him though he earned no more—though he earned less—upon his own plot than he did on an estate. He has selected of his own free will, a life of independence to one of servitude, and the choice ought never to be urged to his detriment or represented as his shame. I have passed over with indifference, as I think it deserves to be passed over, the lamentation of the planter that the 'negro won't work,' because I think that, in the majority of cases, the cry was an ebullition of selfish disappointment at the loss of labor, raised with little consideration for its truth, and without any reference to the subsequent occupation in which the Creole found himself engaged. But it is most unreasonable to say that because the Creole population of Trinidad are unwilling to work in the field, he the reason why the deficiency of labor—out of consideration to them, forsooth—must not be supplied from any other legitimate source."

The last sentence was not the same force in this locality, for natives do work upon some plantations, and it is believed would more willingly work if they were not forced to a compromise of their manhood; if it were not a life of servitude, humiliating because of the forced interpretation of the Constitution which permits the enforcement of the "Masters and Servants" law. These reasons apply with equal force here and have led, and are leading, to the same cry for immigrants, which is urged with more force day by day.

We have asked why the idea thrown out by the Trades Association—that the coolies be returned to their own country at the expiration of their term of service—is not a good one, and have received no answer from the planting interest, or the Government, which supports it. The writer whom we have quoted (Sewell) answers for us:

"The advantages to be derived from an immigration based on *colonizing principles*—and the British Government countenances no other—can not be disputed. Immigration for Jamaica should be advocated wholly irrespective of the deficiency of labor to meet present demands, and upon a broader basis than that of building up the planting interest, or giving it any undue preponderance. That was the wrong of slavery. The planting interest, I believe, the most important money interest at stake, and should not be allowed to be checked in its legitimate expansion."

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sion; but it should not, on the other hand, be fostered at the expense of other interests. When that happens, it necessarily and naturally becomes oligarchic, selfish in its aims and purposes, opposed to popular enlightenment, education and moral discipline. Immigration should be advocated on the ground that the island is capable of sustaining forty people where it now sustains four."

"Schemes of immigration will fail if the main object of colonization is forgotten. They will fail if the welfare of the people is again made subservient to a mere money interest. They will fail if no discrimination is used in the selection of laborers, who are to become at a future period the mainstay of the island. They will fail, after the introduction of immigrants, they are turned into beasts of burden, and slavery, under another name, is reinstated. \* \* They will fail, finally, false representations are made to induce labor to the island, and expectations are held out to them that can not be realized."

The "return system" is viewed from two stand-points. Financially it is urged that "a ship-load of coolies, going back, will take with them from \$40,000 to \$50,000, (no fear of this from these islands, under our system) and, under these circumstances, the heavy tax imposed upon the Colony and the planting interest for their return—passage must be considered a hardship, if not a positive injustice. \* \* The principle of granting a free return at all is absurd. After making heavy sacrifices to obtain a laboring population, the Colony, by its own act, deprives itself of that population as soon as it is thoroughly educated and inured to service."

From an economical and moral stand-point we offer the following: "Colonization, and not a temporary supply of labor, is the chief object to be attained. The principle of granting back passages, and allowing immigrants no choice but to accept them, is, in my judgment, an erroneous one. It is not sound political economy, nor is it just to the people who bear the burden of the immigration outlay. It looks like an expiation of some wrong inflicted on the coolie, and is so interpreted abroad. It offers a bonus to the immigrant to go away after he has become an efficient, acclimated laborer. To offer him a bonus to stay would be the wiser policy."

The coolie system peculiar to the British Colonies provides by enactment that "the immigrant laborer is entitled, free of all charges, to a certificate of industrial residence after he has worked five years under indenture. He can shorten this term of service, and receive his certificate by paying a commutation fee of \$20 at the end of the third year, or of \$10 at the end of the fourth year. At the end of the second year, and of each subsequent year, he can, at his own election, change his employer, and give his service to whomsoever he pleases." These and other concessions to the coolie are "grave and serious obstacles" and "although inserted from motives of humanity, may be very irksome to the employers of the coolies," so said the Hawaiian Commissioner of Immigration.

"Under his contract the immigrant either works out his five years or pays the commutation; and in either event he receives the certificate which frees him from service and conveys the right of naturalization." Every inducement is held out, even to the gift of land and remission of taxes for three years, to urge him to become a settler. "Colonization, and not a temporary supply of labor, is the chief object to be attained."

The protection of the immigrants the Government appoints a superintendent vested with special powers "who indents the immigrant to his employer," "visits and inspects the condition of the immigrants on the estates," "This officer has also power to cancel any immigrant's indenture if it shall appear to him that the man has been ill-used by his employer." The report of this officer is sent to the Government, and it is claimed that the Government supervision is carried "to a point that many consider injurious to the planting interest."

Punishment for refusal to labor is allowed, by imprisonment, for a term not exceeding fourteen days; and in the contract is found the assignment clause, but we can believe that much of the force of these two objectionable points is lost when we consider that the superintendent of immigrants is appointed by the British Government, and that the commutation fee is the subject of much of his business.

We find that the arguments so often used to the effect that the coolie is better off than when in his own country, prevalent in the British West Indies, and under the laws which have been so frequently cited by those who favor the scheme, are not only untrue, but are also very injurious to the cause of the immigrants.

The British system differs somewhat from the French, and it is claimed that under it the pagan heathens are civilized, forgetting "the gross superstitions in which he was wont to put his faith;" and it is even claimed that "more might be done towards Christianizing and civilizing the people of India in one year than has been done by all the missionaries that ever migrated to the East under the influence of the most enthusiastic zeal." But we are hardly ready to believe that the coolies "are scholars and catechumens; the masters, instructors and preachers; the plantations, boarding schools and little seminaries; and that the coolie system is a method of education and conversion."

The discussions on this much vexed labor question will doubtless result in good; for anything which will throw light upon the subject should be put forward, and we know of no better way of showing the probable effects of our present system than by bringing to light the history of other sugar growing localities which have passed through the ordeal.

**Protection versus Free Trade.**  
The discussion of these important political questions appears likely to attract considerable attention, especially if any representatives are elected to the coming Legislature pledged to bring them before that body. That our tariff is not what it ought to be, nearly every one will admit; and during the past ten or twelve years several changes have been made, as for instance, the protective duty of 14 cents on rice, which amounts to forty or fifty per cent. ad valorem; the duty of two cents a pound on sugar, ten cents a gallon on molasses and syrup, three cents a pound on coffee, &c., &c. A protective duty is therefore no new thing; while free trade is also established, inasmuch as several articles are exempt from duty, as is shown by the following quotation from the tariff laws:

"6. Upon all other goods, wares and merchandise imported into the Hawaiian Islands, a duty of ten per cent. ad valorem; provided, however, that no import duty shall be levied on goods or other articles imported for the use of the Government or of the King and Queen, naval stores and supplies belonging to a foreign Government, when imported and consumed as such; goods imported for the private use and consumption of foreign diplomatic representatives; goods allowed by foreign treaties to be introduced free by wharves; professional books, implements and tools of trade in actual use of persons from abroad, and not intended for sale; old household effects in use abroad by those bringing them, and not for sale; wearing apparel, not merchandise, in use of persons arriving at Hawaiian ports; personal household effects, not merchandise, of subjects of a foreign Government, when imported and consumed as such; and other articles of the same kind, when imported and consumed as such."

The Turkish Minister has received a telegram from the Grand Vizier advising him that the Khedive of Egypt had solemnly proclaimed a firm policy of *ad eorum*; provided, however, that no import duty shall be levied on goods or other articles imported for the use of the Government or of the King and Queen, naval stores and supplies belonging to a foreign Government, when imported and consumed as such; goods imported for the private use and consumption of foreign diplomatic representatives; goods allowed by foreign treaties to be introduced free by wharves; professional books, implements and tools of trade in actual use of persons from abroad, and not intended for sale; old household effects in use abroad by those bringing them, and not for sale; wearing apparel, not merchandise, in use of persons arriving at Hawaiian ports; personal household effects, not merchandise, of subjects of a foreign Government, when imported and consumed as such; and other articles of the same kind, when imported and consumed as such."

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